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CO-OPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND WATER RESOURCES AND IN THE FIELD OF LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION

(Commission decision I (45))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. In the light of paragraph 3 of decision I (45) the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems at their fourth session at the Ministerial level in Espoo (Finland) adopted the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (E/ECE/1250) and the accompanying Resolution (ECE/ENVWA/19). Representatives of 26 Governments and of the European Economic Community signed the Convention.

2. On 26 February 1991 the Espoo Ministerial Statement was adopted (ECE/ENVWA/18, paragraphs 10, 12 and Annex I). The statement emphasized in particular the reinforcement of the work of the Senior Advisers aiming at strengthening regional co-operation and co-ordination in the field of the environment.

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3. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of decision I (45) the Senior Advisers examined progress made in the elaboration of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Water Courses and the Convention on the Transboundary Impacts of Industrial Accidents and urged the Working Party on Water Problems and the ad hoc Working Group, respectively, to take the necessary steps to finalize these draft Conventions for adoption by the Senior Advisers at their fifth session in 1992 (ECE/ENVWA/18, paragraphs 30 and 32).

4. The Working Group on Volatile Organic Compounds is expected to submit to the ninth session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution in 1991 a draft protocol concerning the Control of volatile organic compounds (paragraph 4 of decision I (45)).

5. At its ninth session, the Executive Body will consider a draft protocol, or an outline of such a protocol, prepared by the Working Group on Abatement Strategies, for further reduction of sulphur emissions after 1993, on the basis of critical loads, best available technology, energy savings and other considerations, including market-based economic instruments (paragraph 5 of decision I (45)).

6. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of decision I (45) the Senior Advisers completed work on the European Red List of Globally Threatened Animals and Plants and recommended adoption by the Commission at its forty-sixth session of a draft decision on the European Red List (ECE/ENVWA/18, paragraph 35 and Annex II).

7. The task force with Sweden as lead country to prepare a regional strategy on integrated waste management and the task force with the Netherlands as lead country on environmental product profiles made progress (paragraph 8 of decision I (45)), and will finalize their work in 1991 (ECE/ENVWA/18).

8. In the light of paragraph 9 of decision I (45) the Senior Advisers stressed the importance and significance of the environmental dimension of the Energy Efficiency 2000 campaign. They agreed that co-operation with the Committee on Energy should be enhanced in particular for the implementation of this campaign and invited delegations to arrange for the active participation of environmental experts in its work, and in particular in the work of the Steering Committee for the Project. They also emphasized the need for close co-operation between environment and energy experts at the secretariat level.

9. Following a recommendation by the Joint Working Group on Environment and Economics, the Senior Advisers adopted in their work programme activities aiming at promoting the integration of policies based on sustainable development into planning and decision-making and economic activities (ECE/ENVWA/18, Annex III, project element 05.1.1 on environment and economics).